



March 11, 2014

TO: Curriculum Publishers and Authors  
FROM: State of Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD)  
RE: Curriculum Review Process 2014

In order to meet the requirements of Illinois' updated Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), ExceleRate Illinois, the GOECD will conduct a review process to approve curricula which meet the criteria outlined in ExceleRate IL. All programs in the silver and gold circles of quality must use a research-based curriculum that is aligned with the Illinois Early Learning and Developments Standards and the Early Learning Guidelines for Children from Birth to Age Three. For complete requirements see: <http://www.excelebrateillinois.com/resources/standard-and-evidence-requirements>.

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development will convene a committee will evaluate curricula to be approved for use. The committee's role is to review applications and make recommendations to GOECD. GOECD's Executive Director will review the recommendations of the committee and will make the final decision and transmit this, in writing, to the applicant. The curriculum committee review panel will consist of a representative from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD), a representative from the Illinois Department of Human Services, a representative from the Illinois State Board of Education, a member from the Early/Head Start community, and a member from an organization or individual who has substantive expertise in early childhood education and quality improvement (such as higher education, or a community organization).

#### **Process and Instructions**

If you have a curriculum you would like reviewed, please read the guidelines below and the enclosed materials which provide Illinois' requirements for approved curricula. Submit the following materials:

- 1) The completed application cover sheet found on page 4 of this memo;
- 2) A complete description of how the curriculum meets the criteria described below (please follow guidelines on page limits);
- 3) A completed crosswalk of the proposed curriculum with the IELDS following the template in Appendix A (for 3- and 4-year-olds) and/or a completed crosswalk of the proposed curriculum with the ILELGs in Appendix B (for children from birth to age 3); and
- 4) A complete copy of the curriculum proposed.

Materials for the review process must be received by April 28, 2014. The number of applications received will determine the timing for a response from the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development.

For additional information please contact Gail Nelson, QRIS Policy Director (GOECD), at [gail.nelson@illinois.gov](mailto:gail.nelson@illinois.gov) or 312.505.0701

### **Criteria for Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum**

All organizations applying to provide an approved curriculum under the ExceleRate Illinois program must satisfactorily meet all of the criteria listed below. Applications must describe how they meet the criteria listed below and may submit supporting documentation:

All curricula must meet the following 6 criteria. Please describe, in a total of NO MORE THAN 5 PAGES, how the curriculum meets the following requirements.

#### **1) Evidence based:**

The curriculum must articulate a theoretical and/or research-base for the approach and clearly demonstrate how the curriculum utilizes the theory and/or research as a basis for making decisions about experiences provided for children. The curriculum may also have empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of the curriculum collected with sound research methodology.

#### **2) Planning process:**

The curriculum must have a process to guide adults in making decisions about experiences provided for children. The curriculum describes the intent or developmental goals of given experiences and the environment. The curriculum includes an ongoing process for observing and documenting information related to individual children's level of development, current skills, and interests, and using that information to develop plans. Experiences provided for children should be derived from each child's needs, abilities and interests with appropriate teacher/caregiver input and facilitation. The curriculum should include plans for a variety of types of experiences and activities, including large group, small group, individual, child initiated, and teacher-initiated activities.

#### **3) Social environment:**

The curriculum must provide appropriate guidance on how teachers/caregivers can facilitate children's social-emotional development, including guidance on adult-child interactions, promoting children's peer relationships, and managing children's behavior.

#### **4) Age and developmentally appropriate:**

The materials and experiences used in the curriculum must be appropriate for the age and developmental level of children targeted and should include both child-directed and teacher/ caregiver-directed activities. They should be engaging for children, play-based, and present concepts that are concrete and relevant to children's everyday experiences. The materials and experiences should be flexible enough to promote each child's development and learning in both indoor and outdoor settings, and provide a variety of experiences that support children in making choices, exploring and demonstrating independence. Materials and experiences must be free of violent and otherwise unacceptable content.

#### **5) Diversity:**

The curriculum should support the development and learning of children from diverse backgrounds and explicitly address how adults can provide experiences that are culturally relevant and sensitive for children and families who reflect a variety of developmental abilities (those with IEPs or IFSPs) cultures, languages, socio-economic status, and structures.

## 6) Training:

Describe the training program available for implementation of the curriculum. Describe if there are any specific requirements regarding training prior to implementation, if any (i.e., the number of staff required to attend, frequency, etc.).

Additionally, for those submitting a curriculum for infants, toddlers and two-year olds please describe how the curriculum addresses the following issues (No more than 2 additional pages).

- The curriculum reflects the centrality of adult/child interactions in the development of infants and toddlers. (Birth to 3 Standard II.A)
- The curriculum reflects the holistic and dynamic nature of child development, and addresses a balance of all developmental areas: cognitive, communication, physical, social, and emotional development. (Birth to 3 Standard II.B and Quality Indicator II.B.1)
- The curriculum prioritizes family involvement while respecting individual parental choices. (Birth to 3 Standard II.C)
- The curriculum promotes a framework that is nurturing, predictable, and consistent, yet flexible enough to respond to the participant's individual cues and make accommodations. (Birth to 3 Standard II.E and Quality Indicator II.E.1)

## Resources and References for ExceleRate Illinois QRIS

ExceleRate Illinois QRIS Overview and Information:

<http://www.exceleRateillinois.com/>

Illinois Licensing Standards for Child Care Facilities:

<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/089/08900407sections.html>

REVISED Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards (IELDS):

[http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/pdf/early\\_learning\\_standards.pdf](http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/pdf/early_learning_standards.pdf) or

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/ields/index.htm> (provides different format and ability to access specific sections at a time.)

Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Children Birth to Age Three:

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/pdf/el-guidelines-0-3.pdf> or

<http://illinoisearlylearning.org/guidelines/index.htm> (provides different format and ability to access specific sections at a time.)

For Questions, Contact:

**Gail Nelson** [Gail.Nelson@Illinois.gov](mailto:Gail.Nelson@Illinois.gov) or 312.505.0701

Submit Application Packet to:

**Gail Nelson**

QRIS Policy Director

Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development

160 North LaSalle, Suite N-100

Chicago, IL 60601

## Application for Recognition in ExceleRate Illinois System Cover Sheet

Include the following information as a cover sheet to the application.

### Application Information

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Name of Curriculum

Phone Number

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Name of Organization Submitting Application

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Address: Street, City, State, Zip

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Name of Person Submitting Application Title Date

**Contact Information:** If different from above, indicate who should be contact regarding any follow-up questions.

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Name of Contact Person

Email

Phone Number

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Address: City State Zip

**Age of Children for which Curriculum is intended:** Please select all that apply

- ☐ Infants
- ☐ Toddlers
- ☐ Two-year olds
- ☐ Preschoolers (3- and 4-year olds)
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_